

**MINUTES  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2009 AT 7:15 PM  
RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO CHAMBER  
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

- 1. ROLL CALL:** A regular meeting of the Town Council was called to order at 7:15 pm, in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Present for the meeting were Councilors Stephen P. Corbett, Marilyn M. Petitto Devaney, Susan G. Falkoff, Jonathan Hecht, Angeline B. Kounelis, John J. Lawn, Jr., Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Vice President Mark S. Sideris and Council President Clyde L. Younger. Also present for the meeting were Town Manager Michael J. Driscoll, Town Attorney Mark Reich and Council Clerk Valerie Papas.
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: May 12<sup>th</sup>.** Councilor Devaney tabled the minutes, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by voice vote.
- 4. PUBLIC FORUM:** The Chair recognized:
  1. Joan Keene, retired school employee – spoke in support of Chapter 358 of the Acts of 2008 regarding retirement benefits.
  2. Willis Keene, 30 year department of Labor employee – stated that adoption of this law will end discrimination and allow for equal pay to coworkers.
  3. Ruth Thomasian, Trees for Watertown – provided an update of committee activities and noted their annual meeting will be held this Thursday at the Library.
- 5. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**
  - a) Committee on Economic Development and Planning report on Right-of-Way Acquisition – Jonathan Hecht, Chair. Councilor Hecht provided a verbal report of a committee meeting held earlier in the evening. He noted the option to purchase the property at the railroad east of Patton Street for a community path, indicating the issue at hand, is that the property potentially being landlocked by other private ownerships. He further noted that the committee will continue the discussion on this issue with upcoming meetings with the Planning Director and a site visit.

Councilor Devaney spoke against the purchase noting possible contamination of the site and opposition by the Planning Director.

Councilor Kounelis spoke in opposition to the purchase noting the parcel is possibly landlocked.

Councilor Hecht indicated that the matter is still worth taking the time to examine.

The Chair spoke of the bike/walking path adjacent to the Boys & Girls Club and requested examination of past minutes on the subject matter.

Councilor Kounelis asked if money has been earmarked in the budget for this purchase. The Town Manager replied, no.

Councilor Sideris moved to accept the verbal report, seconded by Councilor Lawn and adopted by voice vote.

- b) Committee on Education and School System Matters report on audio-visual improvements to the Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber – Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr. Councilor Piccirilli read the committee report (attached). He noted that it has been decided that high definition cameras will be purchased, with the cost being split between the Town and Watertown Cable Advisory Committee. It was further noted that revised quotes were requested, with two of five vendors complying.

Councilor Falkoff moved to accept the written report, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by voice vote.

The Chair asked if RCN can provide money for the upgrades. Councilor Piccirilli indicated that RCN has no obligation to provide monies. The Manager noted that no dialogue has taken place between the town and RCN and that the Administration will pursue enhancements in other areas, not this one.

Councilor Sideris moved to support the Committee's decision to split the cost 50/50 and ask the Manager to appropriate the funds, seconded by Councilor Corbett and adopted by voice vote.

The Manager indicated that he will come back with a transfer at the June 9<sup>th</sup> Town Council meeting.

## **6. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION:**

- a) Informational Presentation on the Town's planning process – Steven Magoon, Community Development and Planning Director.

Mr. Magoon provided a brief presentation on the Town's planning process and concerns raised regarding 140 Pleasant Street. He indicated that the missing link is guidance in transitions and a long range planning document with a clear vision and real expectations in the process.

Mr. Magoon noted that he is in support of moving forward with this effort and further discussion at the committee level.

Councilor Kounelis stated that infrastructure is a major issue.

Councilor Sideris stated that he likes this approach with the need to periodically review the town's vision. Mr. Magoon stated that zoning is static and that even with a 20 year vision plan, it needs to be updated and adjusted every five years.

Councilor Falkoff asked if the long range planning is within the discretion of the Planning Board. Mr. Magoon stated that it depends on the application, in the case of 140 Pleasant Street, it was a Special Permit that didn't meet criteria and without further guidance, there is conflict. The Planning Board should have provided the guidance while the standard is met by the applicant. More guidance was needed in both cases, he noted.

Councilor Corbett indicated that a neighborhood by neighborhood vision is problematic. He noted that zoning is official land use planning and a special permit application, lowers that threshold. He indicated that he has not seen evidence of that fact and developers just give up.

Councilor Devaney spoke in support of encouraging businesses to move to Watertown as residential projects place too many demands on town services.

The Chair indicated that change is inevitable and people have rights; clear guidelines need to be established going forward. The Chair asked that further discussion be referred to committee. Councilor Falkoff moved to refer the matter to the subcommittee of Economic Development and Planning, seconded by Councilor Sideris and adopted by voice vote.

## **7. MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS:**

- a) First Reading on a proposed Order establishing Water and Sewer Rates and Charges for Fiscal Year 2010. The Chair provided a first reading of the proposed

Order. The Town Manager provided a brief overview and noted that a legal advertisement has been placed in the local paper for a public hearing and vote at the June 9<sup>th</sup> Town Council meeting.

#### **8. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The Chair commended all involved in the Memorial Day parade and made note of the events held at the Shutt Detachment.

The Chair made note of the outpouring of support and praise for the Library evidenced by its many patrons and their positive comments.

The Chair asked that sidewalks and berms be revisited in committee. Councilor Falkoff, Chair of Public Works, indicated that the matter is ongoing in committee.

#### **9. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER**

The Manager reviewed this afternoon's local aid reduction numbers from the State, an update will be sent to Councilors in the morning. He noted the \$270,000 less deficit – but still a double negative.

Councilor Hecht indicated that the numbers are better, but there is still a \$1.8 million gap in the final Senate budget versus the House recommendation.

The Manager indicated that a notice has been placed in the local paper soliciting for applicants to the Storm Water Advisory Committee.

#### **10. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION**

Councilor Hecht requested an update on the Hosmer School basketball court as it relates to planned street hockey. The Manager indicated that the school department will be available on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

The Chair requested a moving date for the Veteran's Agent office. He noted that volunteers have come forward to offer assistance.

#### **11. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councilor Hecht announced the rededication of the Founders Monument, Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup> from 12:30 – 4:30pm.

**12. PUBLIC FORUM – none noted.**

**13. ADJOURNMENT** – There being no further business to come before the Council, Councilor Sideris moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 pm, seconded by Councilor Falkoff and adopted by voice vote.

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted on June 9, 2009 as written, by voice vote.

Clyde L. Younger  
Council President